

Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 13858

LIMDIS

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: JA, MARR, US
SUBJECT: HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE PROVISIONS ON
- COMPENSATION FOR FOREIGN NATIONALS

1. USFJ HAS BEEN ASKED TO COMMENT IN ITS CHANNELS ON
IMPACT OF PROVISION ADDED BY HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
TO FY '79 DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS BILL STIPULATING THAT NO
FUNDS MAY BE ALLOCATED AFTER MARCH 31, 1979 FOR FOREIGN
NATIONAL EMPLOYEES IN EXCESS OF LOCALLY PREVAILING RATES
AND PRACTICES.

2. LEAVING ASIDE ALL THE PRACTICAL COMPLICATIONS IN REGARD
TO LABOR RELATIONS, CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS, ETC., AS WE
ASSESS COST-SHARING PICTURE NO MOVE COULD BE BETTER CALCULA-
TED TO CAUSE COMPLICATIONS IN GAINING NECESSARY POLITICAL
SUPPORT FOR BUDGET RELIEF THIS COMING YEAR. WHEN WE REACHED
AGREEMENT ON LABOR-COST SHARING LAST DECEMBER, IT WAS
CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT 1978 WOULD BE YEAR OF "LABOR-COST
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PEACE," DURING WHICH WE WOULD NOT ATTEMPT TO REOPEN THOSE
ISSUES EXHAUSTIVELY DISCUSSED DURING PRECEDING NEGOTIATIONS.
AT SAME TIME GOJ GAVE US TO UNDERSTAND IT WOULD NOT OBJECT
TO REOPENING ISSUES IN THE FUTURE. WE WERE, ACCORDINGLY,
PLEASANTLY SURPRISED TO LEARN DURING PAST FEW MONTHS THAT
GOJ ON ITS OWN INITIATIVE HAD BEEN STUDYING POSSIBILITY OF
PROVIDING ADDITIONAL LABOR-COST SUPPORT, AND TOWARD THIS

END HAS BEEN EXPLORING WITH INTERESTED AGENCIES FEASIBILITY OF USING BASE LINE OF PREVAILING RATES AND PRACTICES FOR JAPANESE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ACROSS THE BOARD, AGAINST WHICH IT WOULD CONSIDER PAYING DIFFERENTIAL FOR USFJ EMPLOYEES -- ESSENTIALLY THE APPROACH RECOMMENDED IN THE GAO REPORT. THIS HAS TURNED OUT TO BE NO EASY TASK FOR GOJ, HOWEVER, AND WE HAVE BEEN CAUTIONED THAT IT WILL BE FAR EASIER FOR JAPANESE TO BE FORTHCOMING IN REGARD TO HOUSING AND FACILITIES.

3. AS WE HAVE REPEATEDLY NOTED, IT IS CRITICAL AS GOJ GOES ABOUT SOFTENING UP OPPOSITION AND UNDERTAKES DELICATE PROCESS OF GAINING SUPPORT FOR COST-SHARING PROPOSALS OF FINANCE MINISTRY, CABINET LEGISLATIVE BUREAU, ETC., TO REFRAIN FROM MAKING IT APPEAR THAT GOJ IS RESPONDING TO US PRESSURE. FOREIGN MINISTER SONODA AND DEFENSE MINISTER KANEMARU HAVE FORCEFULLY MADE THIS POINT IN THEIR CONVERSATIONS WITH LEADING U.S. OFFICIALS.

4. APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE PROVISION IN JAPANESE EYES CONSTITUTES PRECISELY THE SORT OF PRESSURES JAPANESE LEADERSHIP HAS IN MIND -- CHIEF SECURITY DIVISION, WITH PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR WORKING COST SHARING THROUGH GOJ BUREAUCRACY, REACTED TO WORD OF PROVISION BY EXCLAIMING "THIS WILL KILL ALL CHANCES FOR COST SHARING." WHILE THIS MAY BE OVER-REACTION, WE AGREE COMPLETELY THAT IF THERE IS CONFIDENTIAL

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ANY CHANCE OF MOVING FURTHER IN LABOR-COST FIELD -- AND THERE MAY NOT BE THIS YEAR -- IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT ACCOMPANYING RATIONALE BE HOME-MADE AND NOT GIVE APPEARANCE OF BEING RAMMED DOWN JAPANESE THROAT. BY SAME TOKEN CLIMATE COULD WELL BE SOURED FOR HELP IN REGARD TO HOUSING AND FACILITIES, WHERE PATH IS SOMEWHAT EASIER BUT OBSTACLES STILL FORMIDABLE. APPROPRIATE US ROLE AT THIS STAGE IS TO WORK PERSISTENTLY WITH GOJ, PROVIDING IDEAS AS WE HAVE IN PAST, BUT KEEPING OUT OF PUBLIC LIMELIGHT. MANSFIELD

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